

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name **Bentivar (002-0127)**
other names/site number

2. Location

street & number 1601 Bentivar Farm Road not for publication
city or town Charlottesville vicinity
state Virginia code VA county Albemarle code 003 Zip 22911

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally X statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official

Date

Virginia Department of Historic Resources

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the

National Register

See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register

removed from the National Register

other (explain):

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Bentivar
Albemarle County, VA

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- ☒ private
☐ public-local
☐ public-State
☐ public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- ☒ building(s)
☐ district
☐ site
☐ structure
☐ object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>5</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/ AName of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: _____ Sub: _____

<u>DOMESTIC</u>	<u>Single Dwelling</u>
<u>DOMESTIC</u>	<u>Secondary Structure</u>
<u>FUNERARY</u>	<u>Cemetery</u>

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: _____ Sub: _____

<u>DOMESTIC</u>	<u>Single Dwelling</u>
<u>DOMESTIC</u>	<u>Secondary Structure</u>

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)EARLY REPUBLIC: Jeffersonian Classicism**Materials** (Enter categories from instructions)

<u>Foundation:</u>	<u>BRICK</u>
<u>Roof :</u>	<u>METAL - Tin</u>
<u>Walls:</u>	<u>BRICK</u>

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Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- ☐ A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- ☐ B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- ☒ C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- ☐ D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- ☐ A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- ☐ B removed from its original location.
- ☐ C a birthplace or a grave.
- ☐ D a cemetery.
- ☐ E a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- ☐ F a commemorative property.
- ☐ G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE

Period of Significance

Ca. 1830-1954

Significant Dates

Ca. 1830

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

THOMAS R. BLACKBURN

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Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ☐ previously listed in the National Register
- ☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- ☒ State Historic Preservation Office
- ☐ Other State agency
- ☐ Federal agency
- ☐ Local government
- ☒ University
- ☒ Other

Name of repository: Virginia Historical Society

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 19.8 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing
A	17	724900	4128070
B	17	725020	4128210
C	17	725180	4218000
D	17	725100	4217730
E	17	724900	4127810

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

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11. Form Prepared By

name/title: J. James Murray, Jr. and Bryan Clark Green, Jean McRaeDate: July 2004, final March 2005street & number: 1601 Bentivar Farm Road telephone: (434) 973-6693city or town: Charlottesville state: VA zip code: 22911

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets**Maps**

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name: Elizabeth Murraystreet & number: 1601 Bentivar Farm Road telephone: (434) 973-6693city or town: Charlottesville state: VA zip code: 22911

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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7. Summary Description:

Bentivar, in its current state, is of statewide significance under Criterion C for architecture as the work of Thomas R. Blackburn, an architect who studied under Thomas Jefferson. The main building is a five-bay, one-story, brick residence, resting on a high basement and covered by a hipped roof with paired chimneys and connecting monitor. Though it originally had a Tuscan portico, the residence now possesses a two sided, two-story porch with a split-breaking-run stair leading to the raised entry. The approximately 20-acre property consists of the main residence (contributing building), a modern barn/garage (non-contributing building), a dairy (contributing building), a well (contributing structure), an ice-pit (contributing structure), and a cemetery (contributing site).

Setting

Bentivar stands on a bluff overlooking the confluence of the two forks of the Rivanna River. Across the South Fork of the Rivanna it faces Dunlora, another historic Carr house also designed by Thomas R. Blackburn. The view is rural and agricultural, although some houses in the Key West subdivision are visible across the North Fork. The bottomland between the two forks is now in the hands of the Nature Conservancy. The Conservancy intends to restore some historic wetland, plant a riparian forest belt, place the land under easement, and sell to a family with whom they have a conservation agreement.

Exterior Description

Bentivar is a five-bay, one-story, double-pile brick residence, resting on a high basement and covered by a hipped roof pierced by paired chimneys connected by a monitor. The principal facade is in Flemish bond, while the other three sides are constructed of various bonds. There is a molded brick and stucco cornice on all sides. Columns constructed of pie-shaped bricks, which were then stuccoed, a common practice in the work of Thomas Jefferson and his architectural followers, supported the original portico. Shortly after 1900, the roof was replaced with standing seam metal and an addition was appended to the rear (north) of the house. At the same time, a new porch was added to the south and east elevations. The main floor rests on a high basement, and was originally entered formally by way of a straight run of steps on the main (south) elevation. In the early 1970s, new wooden stairs were constructed in a split breaking run. They do not resemble the ones depicted in the recently discovered Blackburn drawings. Service entrances to the lower, or basement story were provided at grade, and under the present porch. The centered entry is a double leaf, paneled door with a 4-light transom accessed from the upper level of the porch. The windows are 9-over-9 double-hung sashes on the main floor and 6-over-3 at the raised basement level.

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Interior Description

The principal (upper) story consists of a central hall that gives access to four symmetrical rooms. An original louvered door divides the principal floor into a pair of front, and a pair of back rooms. The southern pair of rooms were identified on Blackburn's plan as the "Parlour" and "Chamber," while the northern rooms were each identified as a "Lodging Room." The rooms to the south, and nearest the main entrance, were the largest, most highly architecturally embellished, and presumably the most public rooms, while the pair to the north, or rear, were the smallest, least architecturally embellished, and presumably most private rooms. All four rooms have fireplaces with original mantles.

The pair of southern, public rooms, the parlour and the chamber, both measure approximately 16 1/2 feet by 17 feet with the chamber almost one foot wider. The southwest (front) room, the parlour in Blackburn's plan, is one of the two more public rooms. It is currently a sitting room with a fireplace surrounded by a mantle supported by Ionic pilasters. The room is further ornamented with a decorative chair rail. This room was remodeled as a library in the 1970s. The southeast (front) room, the chamber in Blackburn's plan, was probably used at some point as the farm office, as an exterior door leads out of a closet in the corner of the room. On the brick outside this door there are scars in the bricks and paint stains indicating the location of a former stairway leading down from this door, before the simple front porch was greatly expanded into a deep porch that wrapped two sides of the house. This room is now the principal bedroom.

Original louvered doors close off the two rear, northern rooms, probably the original bedrooms, identified in Blackburn's plan as lodging rooms. Both of these rooms have closets, built into the voids created by the internal chimneys. In the northeastern lodging room, the interior of the closet door is marked with children's heights, dating from the 1860s. In the northeastern lodging room, the closet is lit and ventilated by a sliding sash over the closet door. Investigation of the interior closet for evidence of shelves and usage was precluded by the presence of paneling added in the 1960s. The original pulley for the sliding sash remains, and matches the surviving original sash pulleys in the rest of the house. The rear addition on this floor is now divided into two bathrooms.

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In the northern half of the hall is a single run of stairs leading up to an attic lit by the monitor. Physical evidence such as lapping over baseboards indicates that the stairs were added, but the style of the woodwork is consistent with that in the rest of the house, indicating that the additions were made not long after construction, probably in the 1830s or 1840s. In the attic space there is further evidence that it is an addition. Evidence behind the knee walls that were added in the attic space to create a finished work or storage space (the knee walls appear to date to the period of the addition) indicates that the roof trusses were sawn and the form of the roof altered from a hip to a monitor-on-hip. Furthermore, where the monitor rests on the roof structure, investigation behind the finished woodwork used to create a finished storage or workspace reveals pieces of earlier metal roof shingles pinned beneath the monitor, but not removed when the dwelling was given a new tin roof in the early 20th century. Significantly, the surviving pieces of original roof covering conform to the same type of terne-coated metal shingle, of the same width, originally used to cover the pavilions at the University of Virginia. Given the fact that Thomas Blackburn learned his craft there, this discovery gives further evidence of the influence of the University of Virginia on the many building tradesmen who learned and practiced their craft there.

Another interesting detail of construction can be found above the ceilings and below the floors of the main level where there exist intermediate boards at mid-joist level carrying several inches of clay. Supposedly this is for insulation and fire protection, which could have been a response to the 1830 fire.

The basement story consists of five rooms, which were originally designed as six rooms, identified by Blackburn as a "Lodging Room," "Lock Cellar," "Wood Room," "Milk Room," "Store Room," and "Dining Room" (the wood room and the milk room have since been joined). The original dining room and lodging room retain their original mantels. The plan on the basement story is idiosyncratic, suggesting either a reuse of existing 1790s foundations and structural walls after the fire, or simply a more utilitarian acceptance of function. There is no central hall, and circulation within the basement story is from room to room, with only the dining room and lodging room having convenient vertical circulation to the principal story. This type of plan is not used in any other building designed by Blackburn. The rear addition on this floor is now used as a laundry.

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Secondary Resources

There are two extant dependencies, a well, an ice-pit, and a cemetery at Bentivar. The largest dependency is a non-contributing, modern barn and three-bay garage building. There is also a contributing stone building which, apparently, was originally used as a dairy. It was re-roofed at the time of the early 20th century additions, but this roof collapsed under weight of snow and a new standing-seam metal roof has been added. The dairy formerly contained a trough for water and is located adjacent to the original well. The contributing well was hand dug to 80 feet and lined with dry stone walling. Also nearby is a contributing ice pit. The ice pit is about 35 feet deep and 20 feet wide, walled with dry stone masonry. It was modified by former owners as an underground garage (iron beams were inserted across the structure so that cars could drive over the pit and the person who wished to work under the car would be suspended from the beams) and a frame covering, since destroyed by fire, was erected to shelter the work area. The final contributing item is a cemetery about 100 yards southeast of the house with rough fieldstones grave markers without inscriptions.

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8. Statement of Significance

Bentivar, the Garland Carr house originally constructed in the 1790s, but either completely rebuilt or replaced in 1830 after a devastating fire, is, in its redesigned state, of statewide significance in the area of architecture as the work of Thomas R. Blackburn. Blackburn was a significant architect who began his career as a carpenter working for Thomas Jefferson at the University of Virginia (UVA) and Bentivar is an important surviving example of his work, which clearly demonstrates the pervasive personal and professional influence of Thomas Jefferson. Throughout his career, the architectural legacy of Jefferson and Blackburn's own early education at UVA are visible in the form his built work took as well as in his drawings (Green, 2004).

Thomas R. Blackburn's Influences

As Blackburn's early training at the University of Virginia under the tutelage of Thomas Jefferson gave way to a successful architectural practice of his own in Albemarle County, including the design and construction of surviving dwellings The Farm, the Second Edgehill, and the Second Shadwell, a clear architectural vision emerged. Blackburn's drawings, held at the Virginia Historical Society, show his transcriptions of architectural designs and details from the works of William Chambers, William Pain, and, most importantly, from Palladio's Book I. Throughout his forty-year career, he continued to use these sketchbooks as illustrated reference material which became a widely recognized 19th-century architectural practice (Green, 2004).

Bentivar can be seen as one of the architectural descendents born of Thomas Jefferson's Edgehill design with Blackburn's meticulously-rendered elevation and plan existing as interesting variations on Jeffersonian design (plate I:30). Here, the house is raised on a basement and entered on the upper level through stairs not depicted in the elevation, but the dwelling remains consistent with Blackburn's preferred Piedmont Palladianism, in which the five bay dwelling is ornamented by a compact Tuscan portico and paired chimneys (Green, 2004).

Blackburn's subsequent move to the City of Staunton coincided with an important shift in the scope and scale of his architectural production, culminating in his largest and most important project, the Western Lunatic Asylum in Staunton, Virginia.

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Property History

Bentivar is one of several residences built in this part of Albemarle County by the Carr family, founding settlers, at the end of the 18th or in the early 19th centuries. The original patent for the land was secured by Major Thomas Carr of King William County in 1730. Neither he nor his son John Carr, who lived at Bear Castle in Louisa County, moved to the area. Instead, his holdings of over 5,000 acres were parceled out among his grandchildren. Thomas, the eldest, settled on the South Fork of the Rivanna, across the river and upstream from Bentivar. He built Carrsbrook in the 1780's (Lay, 2000). Although he sold the house to Wilson Cary Nicholas in 1794, it came back into the Carr family through the marriage of Peter Carr to Nicholas's wife's sister. Peter Carr was, of course, the son of Dabney Carr, the second son of John Carr and the brother-in-law and great friend of Mr. Jefferson. After Dabney's early death, Peter Carr was raised at Monticello and served as secretary to Mr. Jefferson.

John Carr's third son, Samuel Carr, owned land downstream from Carrsbrook and across the South Fork from Bentivar. He died childless and left the property to his nephew and namesake Samuel, second son of Dabney Carr. Thomas R. Blackburn and William B. Phillips built a house on this property, known as Dunlora, for the younger Samuel in 1828 (Green, 2004).

Garland Carr, the youngest son of John Carr, originally built Bentivar around 1790. After a fire on 27 April 1830 (recorded in a letter in the Minor-Winston Family Papers in the Alderman Library of UVA), Carr hired Blackburn, who converted the existing Bentivar into a single-story, double-pile house with fully exposed cellar (this is documented in the Thomas R. Blackburn papers at the Virginia Historical Society, Volume I, page 30). Daniel Ferrel Carr and his wife Emily Terrell succeeded his father at Bentivar. Daniel Carr sold corn to Jefferson in 1813, 1815, and 1817, further indicating the Carr family's continuing connection with Jefferson (Betts, 1976; Woods, 1932; Jefferson, 1813, 1815, and 1817).

The Bentivar property passed out of the Carr family in the late 19th century and passed through several hands until it was purchased by the Clark family, who emigrated from Canada about 1906. The Clarks undertook a major remodeling that included the new porch, roof, and rear addition, as well as the re-roofing of the dairy. The Clarks sold the farm to a developer in 1959, from whom the current owners bought the house, in a derelict condition, in 1963. Since then they have attempted to bring it back into habitable condition with respect for its historic status.

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9. Major Bibliographical References

Betts, Edwin Morris, ed. *Thomas Jefferson's Farm Book*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1976.

Blackburn, Thomas R. Thomas R. Blackburn Collection of Architectural Drawings. Virginia Historical Society, Richmond.

Green, Bryan Clark, "In the Shadow of Thomas Jefferson: The Architectural Career of Thomas R. Blackburn," Ph.D. Dissertation, University of Virginia, May 2004.

Harnsberger, Doug. "Bentivar." Manuscript Report. Fiske Kimball Library, School of Architecture, University of Virginia, 1979.

Jefferson, Thomas. Thomas Jefferson's account books from 1813, 1815, and 1817. Courtesy of the University of Virginia.

Lay, K. Edward. *The Architecture of Jefferson Country*. Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 2000.

Rawlings, Mary. *Ante-bellum Albemarle*. Charlottesville: Peoples National Bank, 1935.

Woods, Edgar. *Albemarle County in Virginia*. Charlottesville: The Michie Co., 1901.

10. Verbal Boundary Description

Bentivar is identified as parcel #06200-00-00-050A0 on the tax maps of Albemarle County, VA.

Boundary Justification

The area described in this application embraces that portion of the original property under the direct control of the owner and protected from any encroachment by further development.

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The following information is common to all figures:

Subject: Bentivar, #002-0127

Location: Albemarle County, Virginia

1. South elevation. Negative 22007, frame #1
2. East elevation. Negative 22007, frame #2
3. North elevation, showing addition c. 1900. Negative 22007, frame #4
4. West elevation. Negative 22007, frame #8
5. Winter view from front porch. Negative 22007, frame #10
6. Cornice construction (now repaired). Negative 22007, frame #9
7. Brickwork, Flemish bond with penciled joints. Negative 22007, frame #24
8. Pie-shaped brick remnants of original columns. Negative 22007, frame #0
9. "Dairy". Negative 22007, frame #3
10. Modern barn/garage. Negative 22007, frame #5
11. Ice pit. Negative 22007, frame #7
12. Front door. Negative 22007, frame #16
13. Library mantel. Negative 22007, frame #12
14. Detail: library mantel. Negative 22007, frame #13
15. Louvered doors. Negative 22007, frame #14
16. Children's heights from 1860's. Negative 22007, frame #15
- 17-18. Bentivar c. 1900.
19. Blackburn elevation c. 1830.
20. Blackburn floor plans c. 1830.

The originals of 19 and 20 are among the Blackburn papers of the Virginia Historical Society. Reproduced by kind permission.

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The following information is common to all photographs:

Subject: Bentivar, #002-0127
Location: Albemarle County, Virginia
Photographer: J. J. Murray
Date: January, 2003
Negative Number: 22007
Location of Negatives: Va. Dept. of Historic Resources

1. South elevation. Frame #1
2. East elevation. Frame #2
3. North elevation, showing addition c. 1900. Frame #4
4. West elevation. Frame #8
5. Winter view from front porch. Frame #10
6. "Dairy". Frame #3
7. Detail, Library mantel. Frame #13
8. Double-leaf front door. Frame #16
9. Detail, louvered door. Frame #14
10. Closet door, children's heights from 1860's. Frame #15